# MAG

## THE AUSTRALIAN ATARI GAZETTE

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***September 1991***

8th September 10:30am start.

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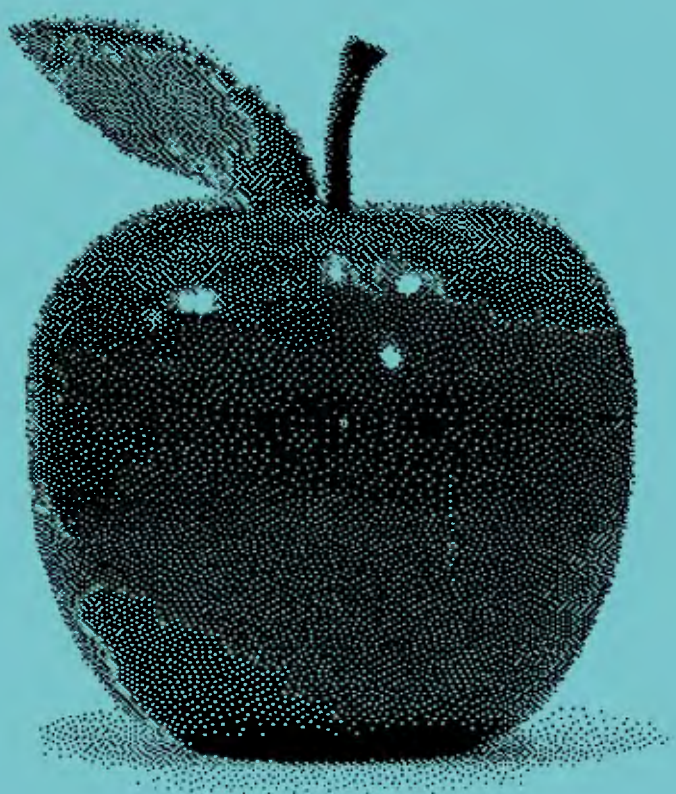
***at***

***Monash !!!***



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**Monthly Journal of the MELBOURNE ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS INC.**
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## MACE Meetings

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| 8th September | |
| 13th October | Rummage Sale |
| 10th November | |
| 8th December | Annual BBQ |

*Special Thanks:*

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**PH LEN BOEHM ON 878-0654**

MACE 1982- 1991

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## Copy Deadline

for October Issue:

8th September 1991

Meetings start at **10:30am** in rooms R2/3 in Rotunda building,
Monash University, Clayton.
***Please bring a plate of goodies for coffee***

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**(ring between 7pm and 9pm only, please as they need their sleep and they have volunteered for these positions).**

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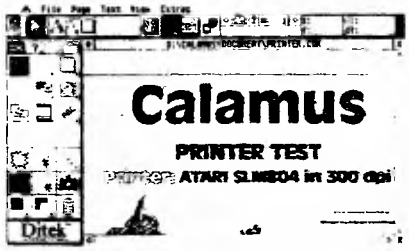

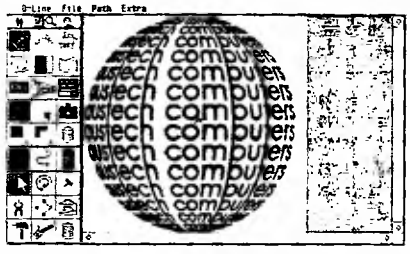


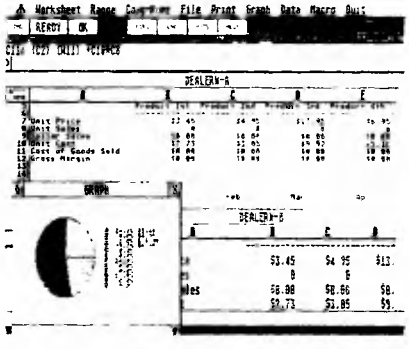

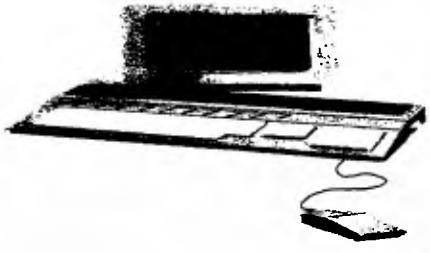

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# President's byte

In case you didn't notice it in last month's magazine, MACE has a brand new committee. I'd first like to thank the previous committee for their efforts over the years. I say 'years' because many members of the previous committee have served MACE in a various positions over a long period of time.
Although MACE has an all new committee, there will not be any wholesale changes in what is provided by MACE. Why mess around with something which has worked well for so long ? This does not mean that there will be no changes. If you have any suggestions, please contact a member of your committee. I can be contacted via the BBS, telephone, or by post via our post office box. We are always on the lookout for good ideas.

Your committee will be working hard this year to ensure that you get the best value for your membership dollar. The benefits will flow back to you in the form of reduced fees (or fees held at their present level where they would otherwise have to rise).

The first piece of good news is that this year, the fee normally charged to sell your old second hand stuff at the annual Trash 'n' Treasure sale will be abandoned. The usual restriction allowing only financial MACE members to sell will remain.

Another area we will be tackling will be the magazine. Your membership fees should cover the cost of producing the MAG but in the past they haven't. There are only two long term solutions - either put up the membership fees, or reduce the production cost of the magazine. My personal belief is that the first option should be a last resort and can only be justified when the committee has done everything in its powers to reduce costs. Does this mean a reduction in the size or quality of the magazine ? NO! The magazine will remain the same or will improve.

So, what's going to happen ? To ensure that we all get the best deal for our money, we will not only be approaching other printers to see if they can do the job for a lower cost, but we will be taking the unusual step of going to a sort of 'tender' for the job of Editor. The Editor normally incurs fairly large expenses which come out of your pocket. The only fair way of allocating the job in the best interests of all members is to open it up to a tender. This action should not be considered as a reflection on Neil Watkins' performance over the years as Editor. He has served this club well and deserves our thanks for his efforts. If you are interested in applying for this job, please contact a member of the committee for details. Our telephone numbers are printed in the front of the magazine.

Well, that's all for now. Don't forget, the committee exists to serve you. If you have any ideas about how to improve MACE, we'd love to hear from you.

*Brian Campbell*

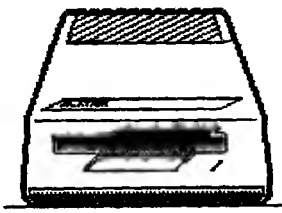
*Coming Soon!!!!*

**Mt Buller Weekend**

(15-17th November 1991)

3rd weekend in November

See Owen Brown for details
Ph (03) 877-2020



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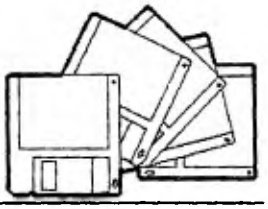
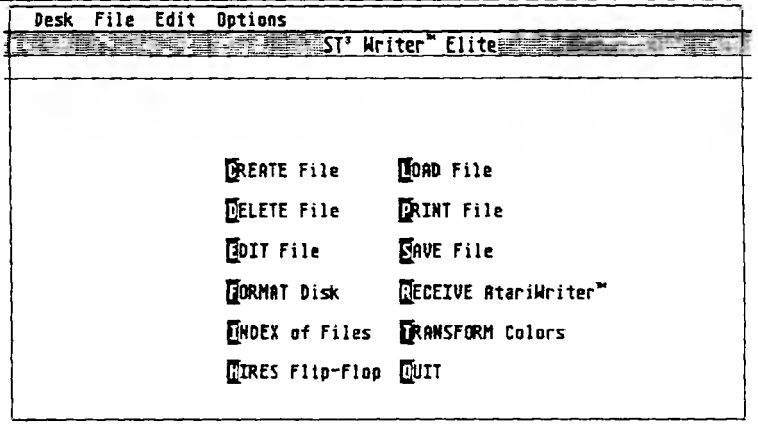


## *ST Writer Elite Version 4*




One of the most basic function a computer can do is word processing. The function of putting words on paper. ST Writer is a program that can do this function very well. ST Writer has been around since the ST came into the computing market. It is model around the Atari 8bit word processor AtariWriter, hence most of its functions and key-combinations are similiar to that of AtariWriter, but more about this later.

Some history on ST Writer. When the ST arrived onto the market, ST Writer appeared onto the PD scene not long after. It is written by Dr. Bruce Noonan. The early version of ST Writer is not GEM based, that is ST Writer does not use any of GEM windows or any of GEM drop down menus, thus giving it a speed advantage over other word processors. The various options were selected from the menu by pressing the appropiate key, similiar to the Atari Writer. When the later version of ST Writer was released, it was renamed ST Writer Elite. ST Writer Elite differs from ST Writer in that the options can be selected in either from GEM drop down menus or pressing the appropiate key, but not both. With the latest release of ST Writer Elite, this is made possible. ST Writer Elite is up to version 4.0, although I heard that version 4.2 has been released.

ST Writer will work on any ST, even the new TT. When Lucas demostrated the TT, I booted up ST Writer Elite on it and it worked perfectly. The TT has added another resolution mode.

Upon booting up ST Writer Elite, a screen displaying the various options with a menu bar greets you. From here, you can start writting your best seller. In the editing mode, a screen with an editing area and three status lines located at the bottom of the screen. The first of these status lines shows all the current tab positions, it can be changed to a different position if desire. In the second status line, the amount of free memory, the current line and current column of the cursor is shown, whether you are in the insert mode and in whether you are typing in uppercase or lowercase.

The position of the cursor is relative to the screen and not relative to the document. I would rather that it shows the position relative to the document as it gives me a sense of where I am in the document. As it is now, it is rather irrelevant as I am always watching the cursor as I typed. Also in the three status lines are two arrows pointing up and down. You can use the mouse the move either a page up or a page down. Finally, there is a message to remind you that to return to the main menu, you have to press the ESC key.

The editing screen may different depending upon the monitor you used. There basically three types of monitor, color monitor ( this includes the TV ), monochrome monitor and the TT monitor. With a color monitor, the editing screen may either be in 40 column mode or 80 column mode. This is bias by the resolution being used when you execute ST Writer Elite. With a monochrome monitor, there are two modes, both are 80 columns. This is achieve by changing the hires mode within ST Write Elite. Effectively, you will be able to see twice as many lines as in a normal ST high resolution. Finally, there is the TT monitor. Obviously, you will need a TT to get this

mode. With the TT, there are three resolution to the editing screen. There are the TT high resolution, the ST Writer high resolution for the TT and a low resolution. These resolutions are cycled via the hires filp-flop option. The low resolution are much nicer to look at as the characters are much smoother, the jaggies of the characters are missing. I guess with small number of TT in Australia, this is not relevent.

When you first enter into the editing screen, a line of strange characters appeared on top of the screen. This strange line is a command line telling ST Writer Elite how to print your document. I find this option handy as it gives me full control of the document.

The editing tools available are the standard search and replace, with or without query, page numbering, footers and headers, double column, page preview, subscript and superscript, escape sequences, double spacing and justification. Some of the tools I like but are not available are creating of a table of contents and indexing.

When you have finished typing your document, printing it can easily be done. Upon selecting this function, a box will pop up asking for some information the range of printed pages, print only even pages or only the odd pages and the number of copies you want of the current document.

If you not worry about getting the fancy functions such proportional font of your printer, the current printer driver should be work provided that your printer is an Epson compatible printer. There is a printer driver that you can alter to suit your printer, this is just replacing the current printer driver's escape sequences to the one of your printer.

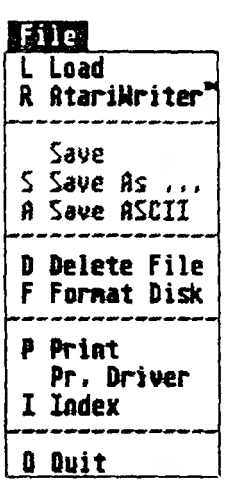
One of the most important feature of any software that handle any information is the ability of auto save a document, in case of a power failure. This is missing from the ST Writer Elite. Sometimes, I would forget to save the document every 15 minutes and would save it when I finished writing the document.

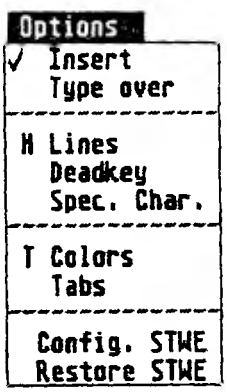
One of the nice features of version 4.0 over earlier versions is the ability of configure how I want ST Writer Elite to behave when I boot it. I can configure it to have a search mask of either *.stw, *.txt or *.*, the size of the tabs to either 4, 5, or 6, whether the colour is back on white or white on black, and the command line when creating a document.

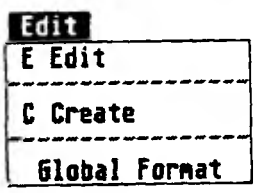
ST Writer Elite has the fundamental disk servicing routines. These include saving a file in either its native format or in ASCII format, displaying the current directory, formating a disk and deleting a file. The ASCII format is saved by printing the file to the disk. This will somehow corrupt the file in that it inserts a carriage return at the end of each line. In some applications this is not acceptable and can be troublesome.

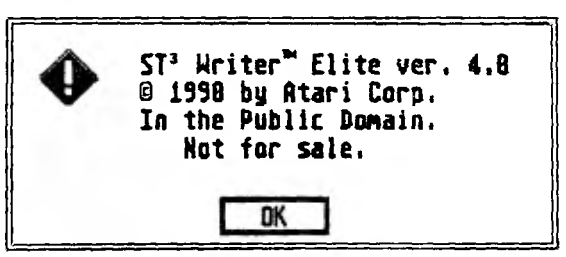
A feature that is missing from ST Writer Elite that is present in most of the commercial package is a speller checker. This is essential for a person who is writing a book or an important letter. This can be overcome by using a PD speller checker. The irratation is that the document must b saved in ASCII format and then may have to exit from ST Writer Elite to boot the speller checker.

In conclusion, ST Writer is perfect for the people who wants a good word processor without spending a lot of money. Remember that it is public domain.



# An 8-Bit Survival Kit Or Why Not Come To The Next 8-Bit Sig

## *A SURVIVOR NEEDS SOMEONE TO TALK TO*

Last year I read a penpal add in an English Magazine from an 8-bitter in "Melbourne, Australia". When I rang the guy, he was amazed, he'd been using an 800 XL for years, thinking he was the only 8-bitter in Victoria !

MACE 8-bit membership is now down to about 5 or 6 regulars. Yet over the years thousands of 8-bit computers have been sold in Melbourne. Come on, there must be others out there !

The best way to get the most out of your computer is to talk with others who share your interest. No one else is going to appreciate the sublety of your basic programing, your skill at shoot em ups or your desperate need of help to solve an adventure.

Don't let your computer die alone, join the MACE 8-bit SIG !

## *A SURVIVOR NEEDS A SENSE OF HUMOUR*

A few years ago I was at a MACE meeting when a Vic-20 was offered for sale "What can you do with it?" someone asked. "It makes a good door stop" came the reply. Everyone laughed.

Last year I was at MACE meeting when a 800XL was offered for sale. "What can you do with it?" someone asked. "use it as a door stop" came the reply. Everyone laughed but me and another 8-bit owner.

## *A SURVIVOR NEEDS TO BE REALISTIC*

Yes the 8-bit is dying, but its not dead yet. With some perseverance, the right software and support from other 8-bitters your Atari just might keep you happy for another year or so.

## *A SURVIVOR NEEDS SOFTWARE*

Most surviving 8-bitters picked up a lot of software when other club members moved on to the ST. There are literally hundreds if not thousands of quality programs still circulating in Victoria. The trouble is that most of the software is dated.

Although little 8-bit software is produced now, in the last few years some amazing software has been released in England with graphics almost of ST quality. If you've never seen Henry's House, Speedrun, Zybex, Draconus, Fantastic Soccer, Blinky Scary Ghost or Tomahawk, you don't know half of what your 8-bit is capable of.

If you don't believe me come along to one of the 8-bit SIGS and see for your self.

You can enhance enjoyment of your 8-bit by adding that special program to your collection. Perhaps its Henry's House the ultimate platform game, Borodino a state of the art military simulation, Daisy Dot III for the best in text printing or Trivial Pursuit the ultimate trivia challenge etc, etc.

Overseas there is still a lot of quality programs you can purchase.

### IN ENGLAND

Miles Better Software (219/221 Cannock Road, Chadsmore, Cannock, Staffordshire, WS11 2DD) are the last big UK software mail order house stocking 8-bit Atari. They stock hundreds of titles and provide prompt service. If you include enough money for airmail, (about $18) it can take as little as 10 days for your package to arrive.

Amazingly in England the best game software is often only available on cassette. Most games can be purchased for about 3 pounds, ($8). Of course you'll want to be able to transfer the games to disk (who wants to wait 30 minutes for a 64 k game to load ?) To do this you'll need a reliable

cassette to disk utility. Transdisk iv is the best. Its available for from Page 6 Publishing. A word of warning though, some cassette games are so large that with a disk loader added they will only work on the 130XE!

**IN USA**

Only two mail order firms are left, Americian Technavision, 15338 Inverness St, San Leandro, CA. 94579 and B&C ComputerVisions, 3257 Kifer Road, Santa Clara, CA. 95051.

Both supply detailed catalogs of products. B&C have the better range but Americian Technavision normally are cheaper.

If you include enough money for airmail normally your purchase will arive within 2-3 weeks. By standard mail be prepared to wait up to two months.

***A SURVIVOR NEEDS SOMETHING TO READ***

Page 6 ATARI USER (PO Box 54, Stafford, ST16 1DR, England) is the only professional 8-bit magazine still published in the world. Although it can be bought at some Melbourne Newsagents, the only way to ensure a reliable supply is to order direct from the UK (airmail 21 pounds per annum or 42 pounds per annum including disk).

With the gradual demise of the 8-bit even Page-6 may not last much longer. Subscribe and we may keep it a float for another year or so.

***A SURVIVOR NEEDS HARDWARE***

Although ATARI no longer manufacture 8-bit hardware, there is still a regular supply of second hand equipment available through the Trading Post and occasionally MACE.

If you plan to stick with your 8-bit for a year or two more I recommend you look out for bargains and purchase back up equipment to see you through. With the number of active 8-bitters probably down to less than a few dozen, its a buyers market.

For those of you with 8-bit stuff to sell I'd like to point out a few facts. Most of your hardware is at least 5 years old, hardly anyone is buying and with a second hand ST costing less than $450 you can't really expect much for that old 800 XL and drive in your cupboard. Besides we 8-bitters aren't made of money, otherwise we'd be ST owners wouldn't we ?

For what is its worth here's my estimate of market value at the moment:

**800 (You pay to have it taken away)**

**800 XL $75**

**130 XE $100**

**1050 drive $150, $200 with a Happy modification.**

**XF551 drive $175.**

If your'e handy with a soldering iron you might prefer to buy some spare parts instead of a whole system. Both B&C Computers and Americian Technivision have a good stock of 8-bit components.

If you have an old 1050 drive, I strongly recommend you try to get your hands on a spare belt drive. The belt is the weakest link in the 1050 and if it goes the drive is useless. There are two types of 1050 drives, tandon drives and world storage drives. Belts for the latter can only be obtained from B&C Computers in the USA and stocks are dwindling fast. In the last year I've had to replace two 1050 drive belts myself !

***A SURVIVOR NEEDS TO GET SERIOUS (SOMETMES)***

Although originally designed mainly as games machine, the 8-bit is still capable of doing most serious applications.

A range of databases, spreadsheets and other applications are available. For those who want to program, several languages are available including C, Forth and various Basic languages. TURBO-BASIC (available from MACE) is apparently one of the best languages available on any 8-bit machine.

For most of us, however, general word processing is as serious as we get. There are several 8-bit programs that can meet this need including Atari Writer Plus, PaperClip and First Excellent Word Processor (to name the best). Second hand copies of these programs are fairly common. Providing you have a decent printer and interface these programs are all you need for correspondence or simple report writing.

Speaking of printers, is anybody out there unlucky enough to own an XMM801, the only printer incompatible with nearly everything ? There is a program available that fixes the problem by turning the XMM801 into a true Epson compatible. See it at a MACE SIG near you !

Unfortunately 8-bit wordprocessing has its problems. One problem is that the 8-bit is limited to 40 columns on screen. This is a major handicap to serious work, especially where tables are required. Another problem is that 8-bit disk formatting is incompatible with other computer systems making it impossible to transfer documents to or from the IBM PC at work.

But there are ways to overcome some of these limitations.

As well as copying most protected disks, 1050 happy drives can read text files from IBM disks and convert them to ATARI ASCII files. They can also convert ATARI text files and write them to an IBM disk. (The IBM disk must first be formatted in single sided double density on an IBM compatible PC) I write for a living and with the use of a 1050 Happy drive can now take work home to finish whenever I need to.

The 80 Column problem is harder to solve. Basically there are only 2 solutions.

80 Column software emulation as used in Omniview and Richman's 80 Column Word processor. As these use graphics 8 mode, they are almost impossible to read on TVs, difficult to use even with a monitor and are terribly slow. I use Richman's 80 Column Word Processor and although I'm getting used to it, it has a lot of bugs.

ATARI's XEP-80. This apparently gives razor sharp letters on monochrome monitors but is expensive. I say apparently because I've never seen one To buy an XEP-80 and compatible wordprocessor from the USA would cost about $200 AUS. As the USA uses a different Composite system to Australia (we use PAL they use NTSC) its unlikely that USA XEPs would work on Australian monitors.

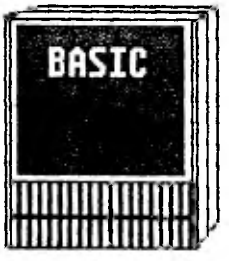
### *A SURVIVOR NEEDS TO CONFESS*

Alright I admit it, I missed the last 8-bit SIG.

### *IN CONCLUSION*

Before you give up on your 8-bit why not come along to the MACE 8-bit SIG and find out just what your 8-bit is capable of ? Or talk to one of the following contacts and see what they can tell you ?

| | |
|---|---|
| Bill Cooney | Wise old guru, main interests, word processing, utilities, and basic programing. Expert in Daisy Dot III. Phone 546-9181 |
| Len Boehm | Fanatical wargamer, main interests, wargames, word processing and shoot em ups. Phone 878-0654 |
| John Stecyk | Hardware freak, main interests, more memory, music and any game with great graphics. Phone 882-7836 |



# The 8 Bit Computer Scene

*In* the May issue of this magazine, 8-bit users were treated to an interesting and somewhat timely article, "The Twilight Market" by Ben Poehland. It raised the significant issues of software and hardware availability in the 8-bit world. These issues have caused me to ponder the past, present and future of the 8-bit in my life. The following mishmash is the result which I have submitted as my first article for the mag.

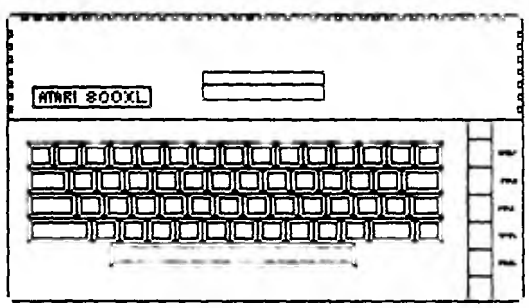
***I WANT CANDY!***

In the early eighties the Punk rock group "BOW WOW WOW" released a song called "I want candy". The title is somewhat ironic as it was also sometime in the early eighties that I bought my first computer, an ATARI 400. So what exactly does BOW WOW WOW have to do with an ATARI 400? Well, as some of you may be aware, "Candy" was the codename for the ATARI 400 during the design stages of the machine.

ATARI made the best machine of the day and I knew I wanted an ATARI. Honestly I didn't really want "Candy", I wanted "Colleen". (Yes you guessed it, "Colleen" was the codename for the ATARI 800. Rumour had it that both machines were codenamed after well-endowed female employees at ATARI). The 800 seemed more of a complete computer than the 400 with a real keyboard, full 48K, a monitor socket and second cartridge slot. My empty wallet unfortunately dictated that, if I want an ATARI, I wanted Candy($599) and not the more expensive Colleen($899).

To cut a long story short, when I eventually did buy, it was a 400 model with bonus factory installed 48K RAM at the regular $599 pricetag. (What a bargain! Today you could buy a 520ST with built in drive at that price and still have $200 left for software). Silly me! The same inventiveness that allowed a 400 to be expanded to 48K was soon allowing seemingly astronomical figures in the 800. How I wished I had saved longer and bought an ATARI 800 with Axlon upgrade!

Oh well, that first mental lapse was nothing compared to the one which later led me to buy an 800XL when the 130XE was already being prepared for release. ATARI had been scheming against me once again. The 130XE had debugged basic, extended memory, and reinstated chroma monitor output. These facts fermented in the back of my mind, and not to be outdone by ATARI, I eventually went out and purchased the 130XE as well. I soon found out that I did'nt like it quite as much as the 800XL, but this was mostly due to minor things.




ATARI was conspiring against me yet again with the then imminent release of the XEGS. They made the 400, I wanted it, I bought it. They made the 800XL, I wanted it, I bought it. They made the 130XE, I wanted it, I bought it. Then they made the XEGS, ATARI's last 8-bit computer. WHOA! Does anyone notice a pattern forming? It's curious that I stopped buying 8-bit machines just when ATARI stopped producing them!

***WHAT DOES IT EAT?***

Software was not too abundant in the beginning but it seemed to be becoming more so with claims of 2000+ titles available. I don't think we ever saw that many here but still it never really occurred to me that there might be a time when there would be none at all. There hasn't been any significant quantity of 8-bit software here for quite some time now. It's not too bad if you believe all you really need is the software and hardware to make your 8-bit keep doing what you want it to do. If you have your one favourite word processor, database, spreadsheet, or whatever... if you have the things that you need to keep your 8-bit useful, then you might keep going for some time with your 8-bit.

Sadly, games software does'nt fit that theory since once a game is beaten or becomes boring it essentially becomes useless. Fortunately for gamers there is still a minute quantity of games software coming out even now, particularly in Britain, and some of it is the best yet seen on our 8-bit.

As reported in Ben Poehland's article, the only real source of 8-bit software is through mail order companies. That's been the case here for quite awhile, however we need to send overseas for software. I have purchased items from both B&C Computers and American Technavision and can recommend them both. Their stock seems to be mostly old titles but that's no big deal as many haven't been seen here. A good source of newer software is Miles Better Software in Britain since most new titles are made in the UK. Most of their stock is cassette based and is therefore best transferred to disk by an appropriate cassette to disk utility.

***WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH...***

I think most people within the club are fully aware, even the ST users, that times are tough for the ATARI 8-bit machines. We have been constantly told in Atari specific magazines that things are in a bad way on the 8-bit front in the US and elsewhere. We are frequently reminded that new software production has been reduced to less than a trickle and that most, if not all, major software producers continuously fail to recognise the 8-bit as a viable machine. Even ATARI fail to include the 8-bit in their own publication, "Atari Explorer", despite claims of supporting all ATARI computers.

So what do I use my 8-bit for? I have to be honest and say mostly for games, sometimes wordprocessing and only occasionally graphics and music. I don't program as I never learned how, which is a constant regret. My new interest is communications because I'm using a little Tandy 102 portable with my ATARI via megaterm. I'm quite eager to try telecommunications but can't afford a decent modem.

Well thats enough of my drivel, I'd be much more interested in reading about what the ST users do with their old 8-bit equipment. Do you still use it, is it strictly for your kids, do you use it as a paper weight or doorstop or what? If you have an unused 8-bit system why not find it a new owner at the annual rummage sale, or alternately, why not just give it to someone who will use it? By the way, I am looking for another XF551 drive, if anyone has one at a reasonable price see me at the meet.

**JOHN STECYK**

# MACE Bulk Purchase

## 1. Megafile 30 Atari Hard Disk Drives $795.00

## 2.Supermon Cartridges from Super Products

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**Clock Supermon,R.R.P.($148)**
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**MACE Inc.**
**P.O. Box 340, Rosanna 3084 Victoria.**

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now measures only 2.3 by 2.5 inches (or 5.7 x 6.5 cm) yet holds 4 Megabytes
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The number of connections has now been halved!
Complete with 4 Meg of memory only: $495.= 2 Meg expandable to 4 Megabytes just $295.=
Available from the 15th of August, so don't delay!

And upermon is still ONLY $98.= ($148 w/clock,

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**How many other computer programs can say that?**

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**Also available are Golden Image scanners (100,200,300 and 400 DPI), including the very latest version of Touch up for only $525.= (including postage).**

**ALL products are fully guaranteed and PROFESSIONALLY made!**
I have had people ask why I don't make my memory upgrades available as a solder free installation kit. This is because Atari had a good reason for putting 2 clips on the MMU chip, which is normally used for this. Without the clips, contact problems occur. Also, the piggyback board used to plug into this actually flattens the socket contacts, making it virtually impossible to ever remove the upgrade without replacing the socket. All Super products have a tradition going back 10 years, to the effect that whenever possible, the system must be able to be restored to normal!! Therefore, better SOME soldering than doing something irreversible!

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Phone or Fax (07) 801 1218

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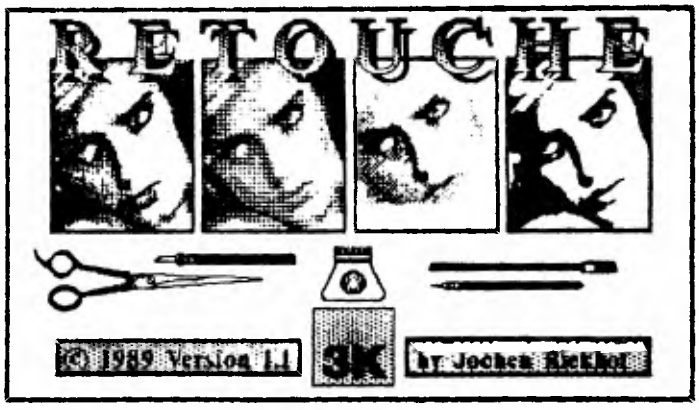



# Touching Up The Greys With *Retouche*

ST Applications – Issue 7

Günter Minnerup

***As explained last month, the vast majority of scanners available for the ST may claim to support 16, 32, or 64 greys, but in reality they are monochrome devices which translate the different levels of intensity into "dithered" patterns of black dots in the same way as the Atari monochrome monitor, for example, does. Given that very few ST owners indeed have access to a true greyscale scanner, the news that greyscale editing software is now available in the shape of the German import Retouche may leave readers of ST Applications rather cold. Fancy high-end stuff, of little practical use to the average punter?***

Rest assured that Retouche is accessible and extremely useful to users of even the cheapest scanners around. Not only can it import Degas and Neochrome colour pictures, but it comes bundled with IMG2TIF, a conversion utility that will, as the name suggests, translate dithered IMG files into greyscale TIFF format ready for the main program. You have a choice between conversion to various numbers of grey levels: the more greys, the smaller your picture becomes (losing detail when later rescaled to its original size), so do not go overboard. Although Retouche works with up to 256 greys internally, it cannot display more than 64 on a monochrome monitor, and there is little point in choosing more grey levels than the original scan ever contained. Another consideration is output resolution: for dot matrix and laser printers, 16 greys is usually sufficient and preserves more detail than 64.

## Tools

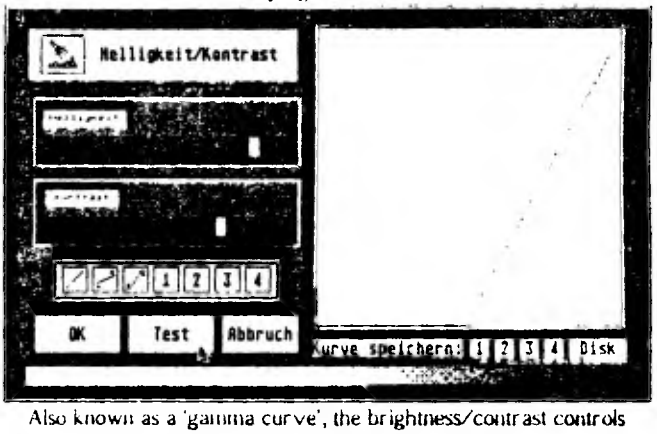
The conversion out of the way, it is time to look at what Retouche has to offer in terms of editing facilities. Remember what was said last month: with this sort of software, you are not working at pixel level, but at greyscale level. This requires a radical rethink for anybody used to traditional bitmap paint software, and your first practice sessions may well be frustrating, despite the excellent tutorial and the many sample pictures supplied.

A photographer would find easier and more intuitive access to at least one of the three main groups of functions: those that are concerned with global effects such as sharpening, softening, brightness and contrast and so on, as they are akin to camera parameters such as exposure, focus, and the use of different lenses. These are used mainly to correct basic faults in the picture, and can be relatively slow on the ST's 68000 processor. Waiting a few minutes only to find that the effect is not the desired one can be annoying but Retouche always holds two versions in memory simultaneously, so with most functions the original can be restored again by simply pressing the UNDO key.

## Mask

Another important help with these global functions is the mask. Using the masking tool to cover sections of the picture in black (or selecting certain greys for automatic masking) will restrict the effects to the remaining parts, thus saving both frustration and time. The mask can also be inverted, and monochrome .PIC graphics can be imported as masks.

Both the UNDO buffer and




Also known as a 'gamma curve', the brightness/contrast controls allow fine adjustments to the representation of the different available grey levels in the picture. Here, both contrast and brightness have been adjusted with the slider controls to produce a steeper and more 'stunted' curve - with practice, you can achieve the same by drawing directly into the curve window.

the mask, however, really come into their own with the second and initially most difficult group of functions: the greyscale editing tools. The more complex the image, the trickier this can be! Fortunately, the user interface of Retouche is a model of simplicity and logic, so you will soon get the hang of it. Basically, your life as a touch-up artist revolves around the two mouse buttons (how do Mac users manage with only one?): the left button being the pen, stamp, brush or whatever tool you have selected, the right button the eraser. All you really have to understand is the key role of the current background colour, which can be any of the up to 64 greys selectable from the palette or "picked out" from the actual image -the editing tool (the colour of which is selectable in the same way) will work only on that background, or areas darker or lighter than that background, or on all areas. Get it? So you can freely drive your pen all over your precious image, secure in the knowledge that it will only affect the parts that ordinary drawing programs could not reach - at least not that selectively.

## UNDO

Before any such operation, it is wise to copy your image to the UNDO buffer so that mistakes can be easily rectified. The eraser can also be used as a partial UNDO, replacing everything in its path with the corresponding part from the UNDO buffer. The two picture buffers can be combined in ways that are far more flexible than the usual AND, XOR, OR boolean logic offered by ordinary paint programs. Add the mask to this, and you get some idea of the enormous power and flexibility offered.

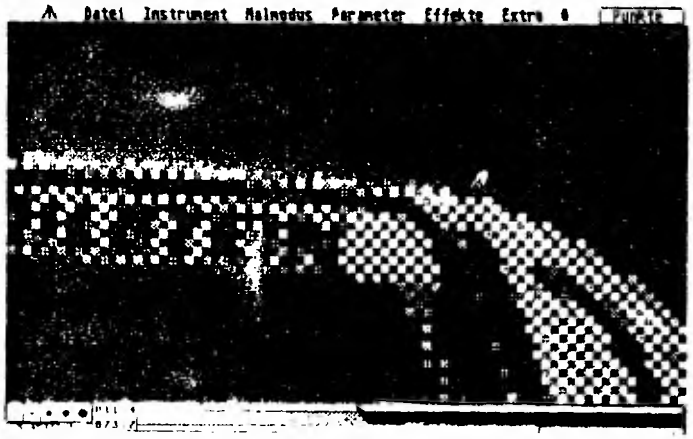
The third group of functions is really identical to the second, except for the use they are being put to. For the image editing tools can also be employed as painting tools in their own right, on a blank canvas. There may be only a few of them, compared to the likes of Degas, but their unusual mode of operation and configurability offer effects that were previously unthinkable: like painting over only selected tones of grey, charcoaling with subtly different amounts of pressure, and brushing with different degrees of "wetness". Not much use for pixel-precise technical drawings, but great for creating fantastic landscapes!

## Print

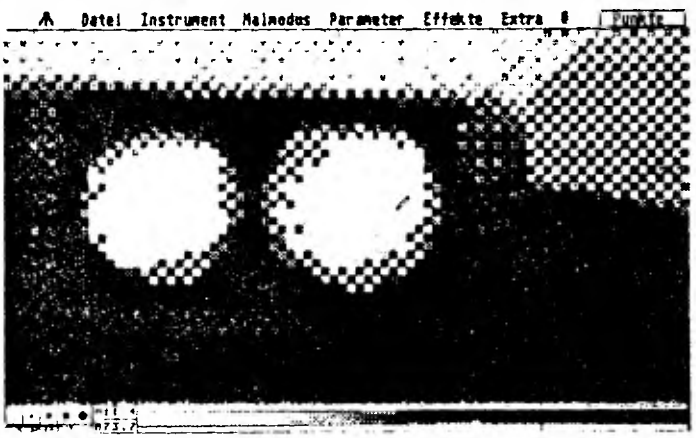
Finally to print. This is handled rather awkwardly by Retouche, as you cannot print directly from within the program but have to call an accessory. The rather small (640*400 or, including the UNDO buffer, 640*800) Retouche images need to be enlarged before exporting as an IMG files or printing on a laser, but more importantly, they need to be rastered to convert the true greys back into dithered black dot patterns. To help with this, Retouche will let you switch the screen display to different dither patterns before choosing one for output, and there is a further accessory for creating and editing customised output rasters (for different screening angles and effects). All this takes some trial and error, but gives a high degree of control over the output. For what would be the point of all that subtle image editing if the results then got lost in a mass of ill-arranged printer dots?

## Details

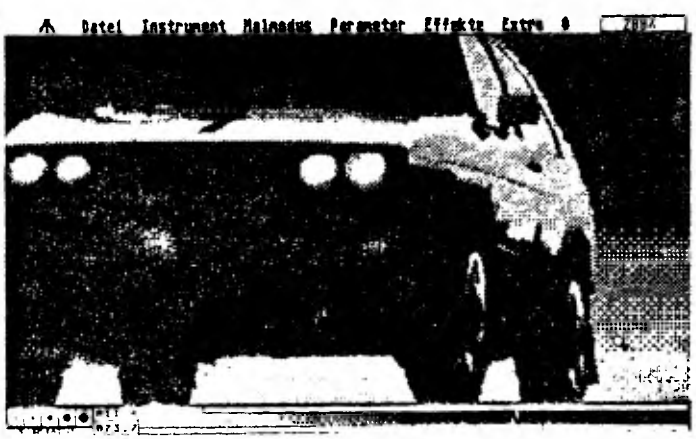
Product:.....Retouche
Version:..... 1.1
Price: ..... £150+VAT
Producer:.... 3K-Computerbild
Supplier:.....Copycare Business Services
231 Northborough Road,
Norbury
London
SW16 4TU
Tel.:..... 081-679 7307
System: ..... Atari ST, STE or TT with minimum of 1Mb and monochrome monitor.
Manifest: .... 4 disks, with manual and (excellent) tutorial. Includes IMG to TIFF converter and Atari or HP Laser Jet driver (specify which), with scanner driver accessories and further printer drivers available.




Here I have 'cut out' the photo of a car from its original background, using the mask to protect the car and then erasing the picture, and - with the mask still on - added a new background of a gradient fill. As the mask had not been defined particularly carefully, I am using the 'Finger' tool to blend the car into its new surroundings more seamlessly.




Garage service: to clean the headlights, I have defined a pen that will replace anything lighter than the background grey (mark below the palette at the bottom of the screen) with the grey marked above the palette. In other words, everything between the background and drawing shades is removed by the drawing shade.




The finished illustration at 200% magnification, after some final tweaking of brightness and contrast to enhance the readability of the number plate and make the body work shine. This is a simple example of image manipulation, but you will undoubtedly think of other applications - 'signing' Gazza for your local club's team photo, perhaps, or putting Screaming Lord Sutch into 10 Downing Street?

# THE MONSTER STEREO CARTRIDGE

## Stereo sound on ANY ST? Don't make me laugh.

**The MONSTER STEREO CARTRIDGE (MSC) is a very small and neat cartridge that plugs into the printer and monitor ports of your ST and provides you with stereo sound when the necessary replay routines are used.**

**Once you purchase the cartridge, all the required phono leads are provided so you are able to connect your computer immediately to your HIFI.**

**The cartridge is fully compatible with ALL models of the ATARI ST/STE and is 100% compatible with ALL existing software.**

### Just look at what the MSC has to offer

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* 100% compatible with all existing software.
* All necessary leads supplied
* Monitor through port provided.
* Leaves your already crowded cartridge port free.
* Sound output in 8 bit resolution.
* Stereo sound on TCB TRACKER V1.1m
* Audio Sculputre music played in Stereo.
* Samples played through the MSC can be upto 80% faster.
* Play samples up to a frequency of 254Khz!
* Amiga samples play in stereo.
* 100's of PD Demos and games already have stereo sound.
* Existing third party support.
* All major software houses are supporting the MSC.
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| Monster Stereo Cartridge | $40.00 R.R.P |
| MSC + TCB Tracker | $60.00 R.R.P |
| TCB Tracker | $40.00 R.R.P |

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# ATARI THOUGHTS

by Nino Banci
(KAOS User Group)

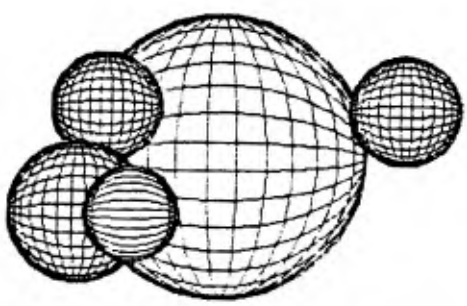
It's been nearly 2 months since I last used my ST. Due to work commitments I have had to use an AT-386. Although I don't generally like using PC's, the inescapable fact is that for sheer market penetration and functional use the ubiquitous PC has a large, if not overwhelming, advantage over the Atari ST series of PC's.

With the recent release of the TT and the Mega STe range, Atari seems to be attempting to maintain its current share of the market and at the same time to try to penetrate into more advanced areas. The TT is, overall, a very good machine, with plenty of power to offer the user. The standard configuration offered provides more than is normally required in general day to day use. The hardware is there and is very capable. All that it now requires is a firm and trusting commitment by software producers to provide a scope of software options that would make the TT a desirable alternative to the current range of PC (aka IBM) clones. I only hope that the TT does not die a slow death due to the lack of reasonable software.

Another surprise was the release of the Mega Ste. This I believe is a good move by Atari. The older Mega ST's are now beginning to show their age when compared to what is now available in the PC (aka IBM) clone market. Although the configuration of the Mega Ste is an advance on the older Mega ST it still does not address the problem that the technology used is well behind current Intel based PC's in the same price range. Not to say that the Mega Ste is bad value for money, it's just that the price/performance ratio which Atari boasted of many years ago has somewhat shrunk in comparison to the PC-clone price/performance ratio. These are only my thoughts and if you don't agree then give me a call and we could have a good discussion.

For those that are interested I have a copy of an article which describes the design of an ACSI to SCSI interface for the ST. This converts your DMA port to a SCSI compatible port. The article is about 20 pages long and is all in German. The schematics are easily understood but you would need to have a reasonable understanding of German to grasp the more intricate details. If you would like a copy, give me a call. I am in the process of getting the article translated but this might take some time.

Still on ACSI to SCSI conversion hardware, I am designing an ST DMA to true SCSI (mode I, II and III(?)) conversion board. This board will utilise the NCR53C80 SCSI controller. At the moment it is in the schematic stage of design. Time constraints against me will slow the development. If anyone would like to help with this project don't hesitate to give me a call.



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## * * GFAGEN11 . . . Brian LEHNE * *

GFA.BASIC Version 3. Tips from one who has learnt the hard way - No.11

==========

### * CALCULATION VERSES IF *

In many cases values controlled by IF...ELSE IF...ENDIF can be calculated by INTEGER Arithmetic, with the following advantages:
(The more IF...ELSE IF...ENDIF's used, the more advantageous INTEGER calculation is).
The Code is shorter, thereby restricting typographical errors and allowing easier Debugging.
The Range can be extended without having to extend the Controlling Routine.
The Routine can be entered as a PROCEDURE and used for several different Values, or entered as a FUNCTION, again shorter Code and easier Debugging.
Examples:

```
A%=129                          ! If A% is between 114 & 140 Return=114 *
Temp%=A%
@Calculate
A%=Temp%                                                    ! A%=114 *

Procedure Calculate
  Sub Temp%,33
  Div Temp%,27
  Mul Temp%,27
  Add Temp%,33
Return
```

The Values could be passed to the Procedure:

```
@Calculate(A%)
Procedure Calculate(Temp%)
  Etc.
  Etc.
Return
```

Or as a Function:

```
Deffn Calculate(Temp%)=Add(Mul(Div(Sub(Temp%,33),27),27),33)
A%=129                          ! If A% is between 114 & 140 Return=114 *
A%=@Calculate(A%)                                           ! A%=114 *
```

### * DO THE DEMOS *

==========

CODE IS FOR LOW RESOLUTION, BUT WILL WORK IN ANY.

==========

```
++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++
                        CALCULATION ROUTINE
++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++
Cls
Defmouse 0
Showm
  ---------------------------- DEFINE THE FUNCTION ----------------------------
Deffn Calculate(C1&,C2&,C3&)=Add(Mul(Div(Sub(C1&,C2&),C3&),C3&),C2&)
  ------------------------------- DRAW A GRID -------------------------------
Defline 1,1,0,0
For X&=27 To 299 Step 17
  Line X&,11,X&,165                          ! Draw the Vertical lines *
Next X&
```

```
For Y&=11 To 165 Step 14
  Line 27,Y&,299,Y&                                  ! Draw the Horizontal Lines *
Next Y&

Print At(12,1);"CALCULATION ROUTINE"
Print At(3,23);"LEFT MOUSE FILLS : RIGHT MOUSE ERASES"
Print At(8,25);"PRESS <C> KEY TO CONTINUE";
Repeat
  Mouse Mx&,My&,Mk&
  If Mx&>27 And Mx&<299 And My&>11 And My&<165 And Mk&>0
    If Mk&=1
      Deffill 2,2,8                                  ! If Left Mouse do a Fill *
    Else if Mk&=2
      Deffill 0                                  ! If Right Mouse Clear the Fill *
    Else
      Showm
    Endif
    ' ------------------ CALCULATE THE LEFT SIDE OF THE FILL -------------------
    X&=@Calculate(Mx&,28,17)
    ' --------------------- CALCULATE THE TOP OF THE FILL ----------------------
    Y&=@Calculate(My&,12,14)
    ' ------------------------------ DO THE FILL -------------------------------
    Pbox X&,Y&,Add(X&,15),Add(Y&,12)
  Endif
Until Upper$(Inkey$)="C"                             ! Exit if <C> is Pressed *

  ++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++
          THIS IS THE USUAL ROUTINE WHEN IF...ELSE IF...ENDIF IS USED
  ++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++
           It was worse using GFA Basic Version 2 - without ELSE IF
  ------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Print At(7,1);"IF...ELSE IF...ENDIF ROUTINE"
Print At(8,25);"PRESS <I> KEY TO CONTINUE";
Repeat
  Mouse Mx&,My&,Mk&
  If Mx&>27 And Mx&<299 And My&>11 And My&<165 And Mk&>0
    If Mk&=1
      Deffill 3,2,3                                  ! If Left Mouse do a Fill *
    Else if Mk&=2
      Deffill 0                                  ! If Right Mouse Clear the Fill *
    Else
      Showm
    Endif
    ' ------------------- DEFINE THE LEFT SIDE OF THE FILL ---------------------
    If Mx&<45
      Mx&=28
    Else if Mx&<62
      Mx&=45
    Else if Mx&<79
      Mx&=62
    Else if Mx&<96
      Mx&=79
    Else if Mx&<113
      Mx&=96
    Else if Mx&<130
      Mx&=113
    Else if Mx&<147
      Mx&=130
    Else if Mx&<164
```

```
      Mx&=147
    Else if Mx&<181
      Mx&=164
    Else if Mx&<198
      Mx&=181
    Else if Mx&<215
      Mx&=198
    Else if Mx&<232
      Mx&=215
    Else if Mx&<249
      Mx&=232
    Else if Mx&<266
      Mx&=249
    Else if Mx&<283
      Mx&=266
    Else
      Mx&=283
    Endif
    ' ---------------------- DEFINE THE TOP OF THE FILL ----------------------
    If My&<26
      My&=12
    Else if My&<40
      My&=26
    Else if My&<54
      My&=40
    Else if My&<68
      My&=54
    Else if My&<82
      My&=68
    Else if My&<96
      My&=82
    Else if My&<110
      My&=96
    Else if My&<124
      My&=110
    Else if My&<138
      My&=124
    Else if My&<152
      My&=138
    Else
      My&=152
    Endif
    ' ----------------------------- DO THE FILL -----------------------------
    Pbox Mx&,My&,Add(Mx&,15),Add(My&,12)
  Endif
Until Upper$(Inkey$)="I"                          ! Exit if <I> is Pressed *
```

* LIMITATION *

A problem arrises if the Grid is of the open type, where there are spaces between each Box, of course SELECT...CASE...ENDSELECT could be used instead of IF...ELSE IF...ENDIF, or ABS could also be used.

```
++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++
                              ABS ROUTINE
++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++
------------------ CLEAR THE GRID & DRAW A NEW OPEN ONE ---------------------
Deffill 0
Pbox 27,11,299,165
Print At(7,1);"        ABS ROUTINE          "
```

```
Print At(8,25);" PRESS <SPACEBAR> TO EXIT";
Defline 1,1,0,0
Box 31,11,295,166                                          ! Draw the Border *
For Y&=13 To 160 Step 17
  For X&=34 To 274 Step 20
    Box X&,Y&,Add(X&,18),Add(Y&,15)                        ! Draw the Boxes *
  Next X&
Next Y&
Repeat
  Mouse Mx&,My&,Mk&
  If Mk&>0
    If Mk&=1
      Deffill 4,2,14                                  ! If Left Mouse do a Fill *
    Else if Mk&=2
      Deffill 0                                     ! If Right Mouse Clear the Fill *
    Else
      Showm
    Endif
    ' -------------------- CALCULATE THE 'X' BOX NUMBER ----------------------
    Clr Count&,X1&
    For X&=34 To 274 Step 20
      Inc Count&
      X1&=Abs((Mx&>X& And Mx&<Add(X&,18))*Count&+X1&)
    Next X&
    ' -------------------- CALCULATE THE 'Y' BOX NUMBER ----------------------
    Clr Count&,Y1&
    For Y&=13 To 160 Step 17
      Inc Count&
      Y1&=Abs((My&>Y& And My&<Add(Y&,15))*Count&+Y1&)
    Next Y&
    ' ------------------------------- NOTE ---------------------------------
    ' The FOR...NEXT LOOPS could be dispensed with by entering the code as
    ' below, but I like to keep all the Code on the Screen wherever possible.
    '
    ' Y1&=Abs((My&>13 And My&<28)*1+(My&>30 And My&<45)*2+(My&>47 And My&<62)*3)
    ' Etc. Etc. Etc.
    '
    ' Also note the FOR...NEXT LOOPS for the Calculations are the same as the
    ' FOR...NEXT LOOPS for Drawing the Grid, therby making life easier, if the
    ' Grid Loops are alterted just copy them to the Calculation Loops.
    ' ---------------------------- DO THE FILL -------------------------------
    If X1&>0 And Y1&>0
      X1&=Add(Mul(X1&,20),15)              ! Calculate the Left Side of the FILL *
      Y1&=Sub(Mul(Y1&,17),3)                  ! Calculate the Top of the FILL *
      Pbox X1&,Y1&,Add(X1&,16),Add(Y1&,13)
    Endif
  Endif
Until Inkey$=" "                                  ! Exit if <SpaceBar> is Pressed *
Cls

Al$="* UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN *  ¦ ¦     Bye once again  ¦"
Alert 0,Al$,1,"GPAGEN11!",Void
Edit
```

Bye once again: Brian LEHNE M.A.C.E. Member
34 Jellicoe Street
Noble Park 3174
(03)-791-7531

# Migraph Hand Scanner and Touch-Up

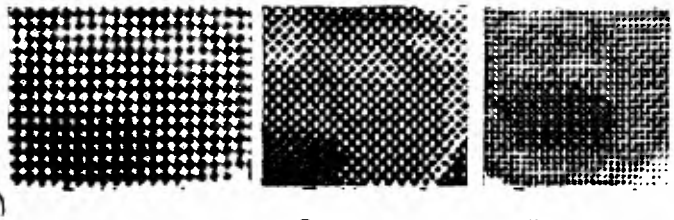
ST Applications – Issue 7

*Mike Kneen reviews a hardware/software combination that DTP enthusiasts may find irresistible: hand scanner and graphics package at a very tempting price and specification.*

**Why this article now?** It's now nearly two years since I read a review of the Migraph 'Touch-Up' graphics package in the US magazine ST-X-Press, and twelve months since acquiring the Touch-Up/Migraph Scanner ,package then being marketed by Software Express. At the time of writing, the Migraph Scanner has been somewhat eclipsed by the Golden Image and DaataScan Professional scanners, both of which offered much cheaper scanning. Nonetheless, Touch-Up is now bundled with the Golden Image Scanner at a favourable price, and no doubt the price of the Migraph Scanner will be adjusted to take account of the 'competition'.

First the Migraph Scanner. In appearance and operation, this seems to be effectively the same scanner that a number of other packages are based on. It allows a scan 4 inches in width, with length determined by available memory. The scanner has the 'standard features' for this type of hardware - variable contrast and a choice of line art (black-white images - 'soot on whitewash') and three 'dither patterns' allowing an imitation of grey tones in scanned photographs. Additionally, the scanner allows for scans at 100, 200, 300 and 400 dots per inch resolutions. (For a discussion of scanning resolutions, see my article in ST Applications 4.)

In operation you select the resolution and the dither pattern/line art setting required. An irritation is the need to set the resolution on the software side as well as the switch on the scanner. Touch-Up offers a default of 200 dpi. A mouse selection is required to match the resolution of Touch-Up to that of the current scan. Almost all that can be said about the operation of these beasties has already been said. Adam Boocock's review of the DaataScan Professional could be echoed word for word as far as the hardware is concerned. Suffice it to say here, then, (in case someone offers you a Migraph Scanner at a good price) that this seems to be a robust and fairly easily usable unit. The scans are of good definition, and the technique of hand-scanning in a straight line is soon acquired.



Pattern 1 Pattern 2 Pattern 3

Dither Pattern 1 Dither Pattern 3

Figure One: Effect of dither patterns (scans from black and white photo)

A few general points on dither settings (I think these would apply equally to other scanners):

Figure 1 below shows examples of scanned artwork from a black and white photograph - of my wife some time before I knew her. The two pictures are scans using different 'dither patterns'. The three upper panels are 4x enlargements showing the way in which Touch-Up uses various patterns of 'pixel clumping' to imitate grey tones. The effect is crude, but as I have pointed out in a previous article, some of the bottom end printing processes such as ink duplicators and some photocopiers are happier with coarse grained images.

A grouse I have seen in articles about scanner dither settings is that a computer-based image handling system should surely be able to automate the choice of dither and contrast settings? However, a moment's thought will show that automation would add quite a degree of complexity to the program. In any case, experience, trial and error, a knowledge of the characteristics of your printer, and the purpose for which you require the image will all have to be taken into account when scanning, so like as not you would end up over-riding the automatic system if it existed!

Hint: I have noted that, in general, the darkness setting needs to be lower for 'finer grained' dither patterns (patterns 2 and 3). In figure 1 the right hand picture (dither pattern 3) used a lower darkness setting than the left hand (dither pattern 1).

Let us then turn to the Migraph Touch-Up software package (v1.56). This is a powerful editor of monochrome bit-mapped images. It allows considerable scope in the preparation of pictures for incorporation in DTP work. In particular, it allows comprehensive editing and processing of scanned images. As the name implies, it's perhaps not the best tool for 'from scratch' creative drawing - but then I'm no artist, and I

await the inevitable storm of contradiction from the Touch-Up creative art fraternity... It's certainly true that if, like me, you have limited drawing skills, a powerful drawing/art package like this will not, in itself, turn you into an artist! That said, even in the hands of the non-artist, Touch-Up allows creation of 'graphic designs' - logos and the like, and extremely useful adaptations of existing pictures - in my case for DTP work.

## The Software

This is very much an icon-driven program. Keyboard short-cuts are limited (and cunningly hidden away in the manual - none of those useful prompts for the key presses in the drop down menus). I suppose that the logic is that in a drawing package you are busy using the mouse most of the time.

In operation, Touch Up has six 'modes' (Drawing, Clip, Text, Lightning, Disk and Scanner) which are selected by the top six icons on the icon pad to the left of the screen. Beneath these appear a subset of tool icons appropriate to the particular mode that has been selected. Fig 2 shows two of these subsets. On the left, the Drawing mode is highlighted in the top group, and the lower set of icons show the Drawing Mode set of tools. On the right is the equivalent set with Scanning mode selected.

LIGHTNING MODE provides a quick paint mode. The main functions of most drawing packages are there (with the curious omission of a basic 'pen') - a variety of customisable 'brushes' and fills, including Bézier and B-spline curves (Fig 3), 'Fat Bits' (editing individual pixels), adjustable spray-gun, lasso and so on. When you bungle, the splendid re-sizable eraser and two levels of 'undo' are handy! The usual choice of 'writing modes' is available - Transparent, Replace, Reverse Transparent and 'XOR'. These determine the way objects you draw mix with the image already on the drawing surface.

Like many other paint packages, Lightning mode allows you to work on different parts of an image larger than the screen. Unlike some other packages, however, there is a useful 'Locator' (Fig 3) to move your way around the picture.

So far so good. But what is there here that an inexpensive package such as Hyperpaint doesn't provide? Briefly, the answer lies in the large images Touch-Up can work on, and the power of the features it can bring to bear on these images. Size is very important when you use a higher resolution printer - 24 pin, laser or Inkjet with 300 or 360 dots per inch (dpi) output. Here a whole screenful of picture will be no more than a postage stamp in size when it is printed out. Touch-Up allows you to work on an image that's large enough to take advantage of the resolution of your printer, and at last to produce computer artwork that doesn't look 'blocky'.

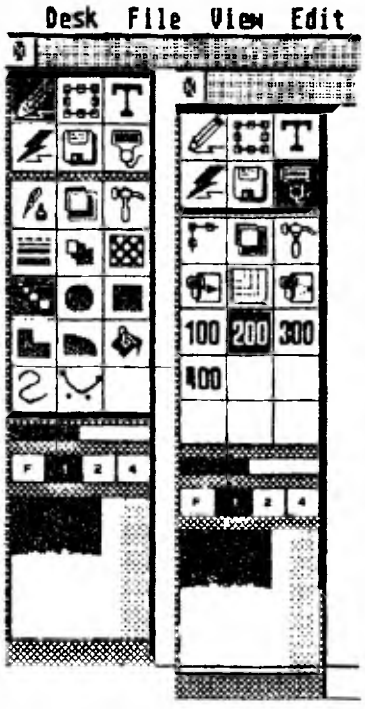



Figure Two: Icon Sets

Drawing Mode (left)
Scanning Mode (right).

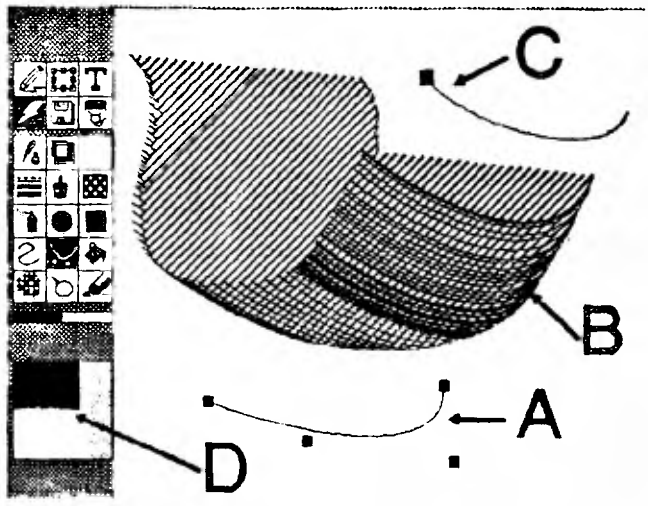



Figure Three: Bézier curves

A - Bézier curve and its control points
B - some brushwork
C - outline of a "Bézier Brush" ready for use
D - the locator box to move the work area

Not only will Touch-Up deal with a large image file, it will also allow you to work on the whole image at 'Fit-to-screen' size where necessary. Since the screen displays something like 80 dpi, a reasonable sized picture needs several 'screenfuls'. This would make life difficult if you were attempting to place, copy or move elements of the picture or lines of text larger than a screen. Many of the Touch-up features will work with the whole picture displayed, neatly avoiding this problem. Some packages will only allow you to preview the whole image, not to do anything with it.

## The Various Modes

Drawing mode adds several features to the basic ones outlined in 'Lightning', for example line styles, weights and shadows.

File mode handles all the disk operations, in particular allowing a wide range of file formats to be imported. These include Degas/Elite, .IMG, MacPaint, .NEO-chrome, .PCX, .TIF, .TNY and .GEM. Output options include .IMG and Degas, but also usefully .PCX, .GIF, .TIF, IFF-ILBM. Although these sound obscure formats to many ST users, they do allow flexibility in exporting images to, say, a PC-based system. File mode also allows a direct output to the printer if you have at least 2 Megabytes of Ram and a GDOS printer driver. Direct output to the Atari Laser is also possible, even in the absence of GDOS.

Clip mode allows you to carry out various processes on a selected area of the image, designated by drawing out a 'clip box' over the area you want. You can then flip, mirror, slant, rotate (from 1/10 of a degree up). You can also move or copy the contents of the clip area, choosing between the 'write modes' (see above) for the way in which you wish to paste down your clip. It's very handy to be able to save the clip to the clipboard, or to disk in a variety of formats. Equally, an image from disk can be loaded into a clip box and then pasted into your current work. Clip mode also allows you to apply various processes to the clip area - colour reversal, masking part of an image with a pattern, automatically cleaning up stray dots and so forth.

Scan mode simply controls the scanner - or rather partly controls the scanner. I have already remarked on the division of control between software and hardware here. Scanned images can either fill the page, or they can be directed to a pre-sized clip box for incorporation in an existing image.

Text Mode is limited to 35-character strings, and is really only intended for labels and headings. Touch-Up is no DTP package! Outline fonts are provided in 10 styles ranging from Chancery (curiously the default!) to Helvetica and various cousins of Times - Bookman, Palatino, Schoolbook and so on. There are no add-on fonts, but what is provided is quite

adequate for the limited task for which this mode is intended. Using Timeworks DTP, I find Touch-Up's text mode useful for producing a big headline as an image file, and maybe for incorporating a picture into the Heading. Most of the text effects you'd expect are provided - bold, slant (forwards/backwards), outlined, filled and so on. Two points to note: text generation is slow, and outline fonts are not necessarily going to look brilliant in small sizes. You may also feel the need for some 'kerning' (moving two letters closer together to eliminate excessive white space between them). This can be done by entering Clip mode and moving chunks of text closer together. It sounds clumsy, but works well.

## General Features

A particularly useful feature is the control the program allows over page size, clip size and dot resolution. The program will allow you to determine the precise frame size for an image file in, say, a Timeworks document to be output at 300 dpi, so that the image may be loaded with no distortion. Equally, the clip box may be set to the undistorted size for an image that is being read into your current picture.

Image files are large, and loading is not instant by any means! Given a number of image files on disk with obscure file names which fail to remind you of their contents (!), the 'slide viewer' feature allowing a quick 'peep' at a file, telling you height and width in pixels, and showing the resolution, is very useful!

The manual is clear and straightforward - except that, as so often, the lack of index spoils the effect slightly. Because the manual is laid out by mode and by icon set, there is a fair bit of repetition. This is no great problem except that it doesn't encourage you to read it from cover to cover, so that you may well miss some handy tips - the existence of a set of keyboard short-cuts, or the possibility of making the Tools menu 'Tearaway' for example (Fig 4).

On this last matter, the Tearaway tools menu is perhaps one of my few disappointments with Touch-Up. A keyboard command is required to produce the Tearaway menu - it would be lovely to simply click the right mouse button to bring up a pop-up tools menu as with Arabesque and Megapaint!

## Hardware Requirements

Touch-Up will run happily on a 1040 ST - I used this configuration for some time. A useful feature of the program is that it will allow 'paging to disk'. That is to say, if you have a Hard Disk, the program will allow you to use some of your hard disk capacity instead of RAM for handling large images. BUT - this will be slow, AND it only works with hard disks. None the less, if you have a 1040 and hard drive, then this facility means that you know you can handle the occasional larger image. 'Paging' to a floppy disk would be too limited in size and slow to be of practical use. A memory upgrade to 2.5 Megabytes allows much greater flexibility here. It also allows direct GDOS output to the printer. With less than 2 Megabytes of RAM, direct output is not possible, and a separate Outprint utility is provided. This means you have to leave the program and enter Outprint in order to see a draft of your latest masterpiece on paper. Although it is possible to 'shell' to and fro between the programs, the delay is very irritating. On a floppy based system stronger epithets might apply.... Now that memory is cheaper....

## Speed

Touch-Up pays a price in speed for the power and scope of some of its features. The Lightning Mode compensates for this to a large extent, giving a speed of operation similar to other art packages for the basic functions. You don't then mind the slowness of some of the more exotic and powerful pixel-crunching. The Manual notes that Touch-Up will run faster without GDOS installed. On a floppy based system you could easily arrange this - re-booting with GDOS only if required for a printout. I use G+PLUS (an improved, third party GDOS substitute), and am happy to say that Touch-Up doesn't seem to mind the substitution. Furthermore, I couldn't see any noticeable difference in speed between running with G+Plus and without it. It may be that the effect is only seen with 'genuine GDOS' or with smaller RAM.

## Conclusions

A useful and powerful adjunct to a scanner, and an excellent way of preparing images for DTP work. It's still worth having - especially at the special offer prices currently available with the Golden Image Scanner. I very much hope someone will continue to sell Touch-Up as a progam on its own. At a price of £90-£100 it would compete quite well with Megapaint and the like.

## Availability

Touch-Up is available bundled with the Golden Image Scanner from Evesham Micros at £179 for scanner and program.

## Competition

STAD - Power Computing

Arabesque - Signa (bit image and vector graphics); demo disk available on ST Club disk DEM.47.

Megapaint - Silica Systems £99.95 - fully reviewed by Frank Hollis in January ST Applications.

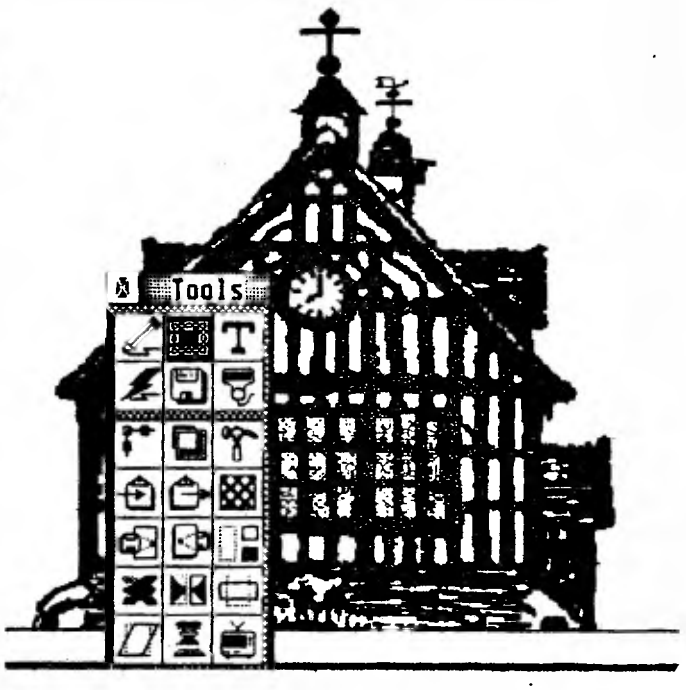



Figure Four: Tearaway menu in use

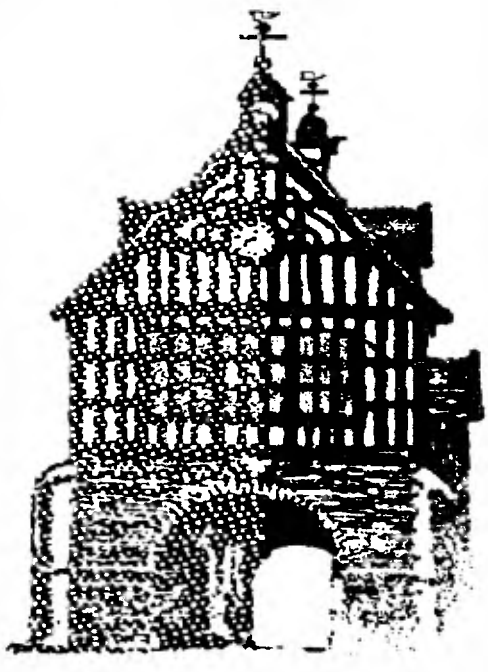


Figure Five: Masks and sprays modifying a scanned pen and ink drawing

May/June 1991

# DTP World

The Publishing Newsletter from Soft-Logik Publishing

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***"PaintJet paper can cost $20 for 200 sheets, and can make a very big difference in print quality."***

Which Printer For Me?
See page 3.

## Fontology 101

**By Deron Kazmaier**

Fonts, the bane of desktop publishers, come in as many weights and shapes as their human users (or abusers). They make life interesting yet difficult for a publisher. With nearly as many font formats as spoken languages, it's surprising they don't call it the "Formats of Babel." There are Compugraphic Intellifont, BitStream Bullet, Icarus, Amiga AFNT, Macintosh FONT & FOND, IBM Windows, Atari GDOS, Adobe Type 1 (in MAC, PC, and now NeXT formats), not to mention a dozen other program specific outline fonts, with PageStream just as guilty. With V2 on the Amiga (and soon the ST), we tried to change that and make life easier for all. Did we? Not really. Sure, the user now has the ability to use an incredible number of fonts. With Compugraphic fonts numbering near one hundred, and Adobe Type 1 fonts near the ten thousand mark, people now have a choice. Isn't that what makes life so much more interesting? However, now one must deal with Compugraphic fonts that don't print to PostScript, characters that are available in one font and not another (even the same font found in different formats), non-Adobe Type 1's that break the ATM rules. All this amounts to a complexity that is an order of magnitude greater than before. Before we take that leap into confusion, let's go back to the basics of PageStream fonts.

Continued on page 4

## The Hidden Source

**By Mark Wetzel**

One source of technical help offered by Soft-Logik is the Soft-Logik BBS. If you own a modem and communications software, this "Hidden Source" could provide you with some of the best solutions or answers to any problems or questions you may have.

The BBS is divided into two sections: a message base and a file transfer section. The message base is the place where you can post messages. The transfer section is the place where you send (upload, or u/l) or receive (download, or d/l) files. The main purpose of this BBS is to support the users of Soft-Logik products. Additionally, this BBS is used to support dealers and betatesters. (If you are a dealer, when you log on, send E-mail to the sysops and you will be given access to additional areas.)

The transfer and message base sections are sub-divided into special interest areas. There is a General area, Commodore Amiga, Atari ST, Macintosh and PC areas, plus PageStream Amiga and PageStream ST forums. The message base and transfer libraries are numbered the same so that files uploaded to a specific library correspond with the messages in the message base. The message base is where you can post messages to get technical help, sales help, or just get involved in a conversation or discussion. Messages are posted asking various questions. For example, there was a recent question posted asking about changing from a Hewlett-Packard DeskJet and buying a HP LaserJet IIP. Several people had comments and suggestions as to the pros and cons of each printer, people who themselves were once faced with the same dilemma. In addition to technical questions, there are postings about new products and developments. Atari and Commodore marketing efforts, other software packages, suggestions, and anything an enduser cares to ask or comment about. The great advantage to posting a message on the BBS is that you're tapping into the experience of all the people that use the BBS. If you post a question you're likely to get four or five responses, all including small pieces of information that can evolve into the big picture. In addition, the answers available there for other people with similar problems.

Continued on page 4

# DTP World

# From The Editor

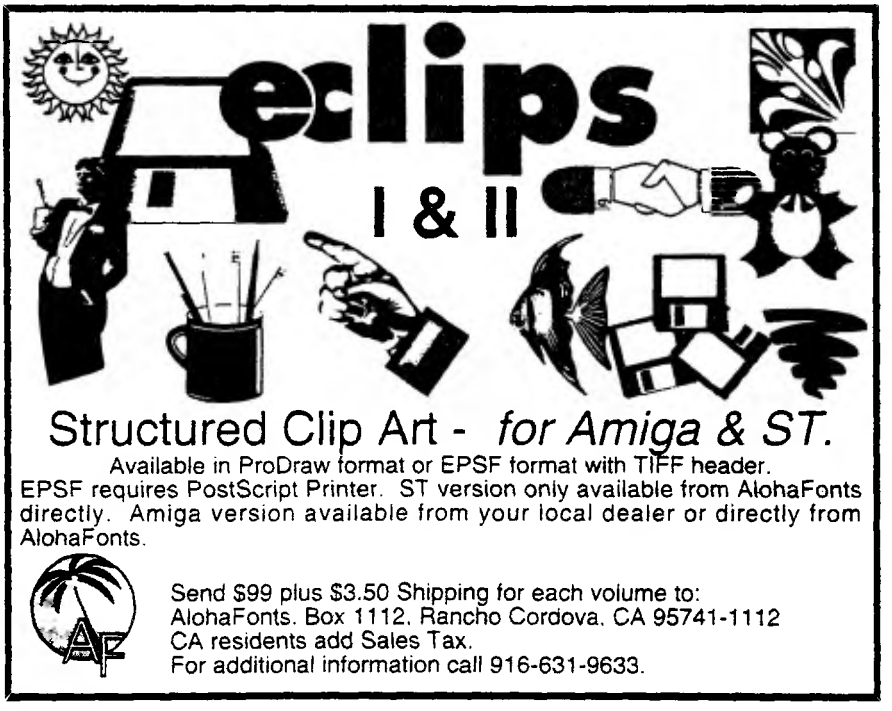
Hi and welcome to the first issue of DTP World. DTP World is published by Soft-Logik Publishing Corporation for Atari and Amiga dealers, usergroups and registered owners of our products. Rather than try to send separate publications to dealers, usergroups and registered owners, we have combined the SL Free Press, SLUG and SL Review into DTP World. This saves money and time and results in a better publication. DTP World, with a circulation of around 15,000, will be around every two months with articles about fonts and printers and graphics and new product annoucements and...

Speaking of fonts, the owner/president of Soft-Logik and sole programmer of PageStream is writing a series of articles on PageStream font handling. The series could last quite a few issues, he already has three publications worth of articles and is planning on more, so filling up the pages of DTP World is going to be pretty easy for now. Those of you publishing your own newsletter, be it for the usergroup, church or whatever, know just how big of a hassle it can be finding articles to fill the pages.

The feature article for this issue is on printers and goes into some basic detail on printer technology and specific detail on printer costs. We felt an article on printers to be one of the most needed for desktop publishing users. A good many of the calls to technical support deal with advice on the purchase of a printer, so hopefully this article can educate those of you who aren't up on computer technology and are looking to purchase a printer. One might take particular notice to the "Printer Chart" on page 7, notice that some PostScript laser printers have come down nearly to that of some dot matrix printers. We have just purchased a new QMS PS 410 at a retail of $2795. A little over two years ago we purchased an Apple LaserWriter IINTX at a retail price of around $7000. The QMS is smaller, faster and cheaper than the Apple. Of course Adobe just wants to keep market share.

One final note:
As you will notice, we have included advertising from the Soft-Logik supporting community. If you're interested in fonts, graphics or DTP peripherals for PageStream then please contact and support our advertisers who offer a variety of quality products.

Brad Kazmaier
Director of Special Projects



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**DTP World**

# Which Printer For Me?

• By Dan Weiss •

There you are at the computer store, and you face a dilemma. You have had your computer awhile and everything is fine, except for your printer. Oh, it was fine when you got it, but now it is too slow, too noisy or just plain not what you want anymore. The dealer shows you all of the nifty printers available. Some do color, some PostScript, some have wide carriages and some print on single sheets. The choices in prices are almost as varied, from a couple hundred dollars to a couple thousand. Before you lay down the money for a new printer, STOP! Take a few minutes and read this article. It's broken into two parts. The first section covers the differences between different printer technologies. The second part compares the costs associated with each printer type. Not just the printer costs, but the "hidden" consumable costs like ribbons, toner and paper. Hopefully, it will lend some perspective to your decision. Before you start looking, it is good to understand the different ways the printers put images on paper.

### The Technologies

**Impact Dot Matrix-** Impact dot matrix printers are the modern equivalent of typewriters. They create images by striking an inked ribbon on the page and leaving an image. Impact printers are the least expensive of all classes and generate some very high quality images. This type of printer is the only kind that multi-part business forms will work with. Impact printers can use just about any type of paper from single sheet to continuous feed. The big disadvantages to this type of printer are that it tends to be slow and quite noisy. It also is poor at printing halftones, which affects the quality of gray scale and color images.

**Inkjet-** Inkjet printers print by shooting small dots of ink at the page. Because no little pins are striking the paper, inkjet printers are very quiet. The only moving parts are those moving the print head and paper which are generally very reliable. The nozzle that shoots the ink is usually part of the ink cartridge and is thrown away whenever it runs out of ink. Color inkjet printers give exceptional results because nothing touches the ink after it touches the paper. The colors are vibrant and mix well, probably the best color results available under $10,000. The downside is that inkjet printers require costly special paper and ink for best results, otherwise the inks bleed on the page or run when they get wet.

**Laser-** Imagine a photocopier connected to your computer. That is pretty much what a laser printer is. It creates images by laying toner down on the paper and melting it into the page. The paper, toner cartridges and other supplies are the same as for photocopiers. Laser printers are generally quite fast and give excellent high resolution results. The major limitation is that they do not do color, and are generally quite expensive.

**PostScript Laser-** This is a special subclass of laser printers. As a piece of hardware it works just like any other laser printer, but it

Continued on page 5

## Soft-Logik Publishing

### Market Mania

The 2.1 Atari ST upgrade notice is out, and the phones have been ringing constantly. Thanks for giving us a great response!!! To remind those of you who have not upgraded. . . It's $75 until August 1, and after August 1st, it will be $100. You'll get a new manual, a quickstart manual and four new disks. Sounds too good to pass up :-) At press time the manual printing was near completion, expect your upgrades shortly.

### New Products

Yes, when you thought you could never have enough fonts and clip art. We're going to be giving you just what you asked for. MORE!! Soft-Logik has licensed over 600 Type 1 format fonts and over 3,000 EPS clip art illustrations; pricing and availability has not been decided. More news... Currently, the marketing department is working on a questionnaire that will be sent to randomly selected registered owners. The questionnaire will hopefully be valuable in improving our services.

### Amiga Future

Art Expression, BME, Hotlinks, PageLiner and PageStream 2.2. New and with no added preservatives or cholesterol! PageStream 2.2, BME and PageLiner will be released (no date set) with HotLinks compatibility. Art Expression, a structured drawing program, is looking good and also has no set release date.


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# DTP World

## The Hidden . . .

Logging on to the BBS for the first time is very simple. The BBS will simply ask you various questions designed to get to know who is logging on and to get information to tailor the BBS to your computer and communications software. It asks questions like what is your screen size, the computer you're running on, your name, your telephone number, etc. Just fill out the information and things should run smoothly. You do not need to be an owner of a Soft-Logik product to log on to the BBS, but most of the conversation and messages concern our products.

With a lot of BBS systems, you have to leave a note to the sysop asking for validation. With Soft-Logik's BBS you're automatically validated. If you're a dealer you may want to leave E-mail to the sysop to get access to the private dealer sections of the BBS. Do not send E-mail messages to the sysop or Gumby concerning technical support questions, for any of Soft-Logik's products, this is not the best way to get your questions answered. The sysop for SL's BBS is actually many different people, depending on who has time to get up on the system, which is the reason for the sysop being named Gumby.

To start reading messages, there are several main menu options that you'll need to be familiar with: **S** - Scan messages on the current sub-board. This command allows you to read the messages on the sub-board you are currently on. The current sub-board name and number are shown on the main menu prompt. **Q** - Quickscan current sub-board. This will read the new messages on the current sub-board. **N** - Newscan. Newscan quickscans all the sub-boards. **Z** - Express newscan. This will read all new messages on all selected sub-boards, but without pausing between messages. The following is a listing and explanation of the maior publicly available message boards and a brief explanation: 1)General- Non-PageStream non-computer specific messages. 2)PageStream Amiga- Forum for PageStream Amiga. 3)PageStream ST- Forum for PageStream Atari. 4)PageStream Fonts- Forum for fonts, including PageStream fonts, PostScript fonts and AGFA Compugraphic fonts. 8)Atari ST- Atari ST/STe/TT forum for computer specific material. 9)Commodore Amiga- Commodore Amiga forum for computer specific material.

Because of the large volume of users, it is sometimes difficult to log on during non prime-time hours (5pm to 7am Central time). The BBS communicates up to 2400 baud at 314-894-0057. For a more detailed explanation of the SL BBS call 1-800-829-8608 for a free pamphlet.


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## Fontology. . .

Prior to version 2 of PageStream, knowing which font to use was simple, because there wasn't a choice! The font metric, or .FM files, contained the width (or spacing) for each individual character used as well as a kerning table. An .FM was required for every font. Drawing to the screen, dot matrix printing, and even PostScript output needed it.

The bitmapped fonts, ending with numerical point size file name extensions (such as .12 for twelve points and .14 for fourteen points) and a letter signifying the screen resolution it was designed for (such as H for hires and I for interlaced), were used for screen display and is the reason we often referred to them as screen fonts. The outlines, ending in .DMF, were used only for printing to dot matrix printers.

The PostScript header fonts, with a .PSF file name extension, contained information to allow characters to be printed even if they existed in a different part of the character set than what PageStream expected or if the character was built from several pieces (used mostly with accented characters such as Ü) in the PostScript resident or downloaded font. The .PSF also indicated the file name of the font to download to the printer if was not a font that came with your printer.

With the advent of PageStream 2, even the old font files become overtly complex. Bitmap fonts are now used for not only screen display, but for dot matrix output as well. Outlines are not just for dot matrix printing anymore. They can now be used for screen display at larger point sizes for a more readable and pleasing appearence, and converted to a PostScript font and downloaded to a PostScript printer when that font is not available in the printer, eliminating the need for most .PS files.

If you think about it for a second, you may come across a small problem. It's clear what happens when you just have an .FM and a bitmap (helv.im and helv.12h as an example). You will get scaled bitmap output no matter what dot matrix printer or what point size you are printing at, as well as the usual scaled bitmap screen display. (However, you can't print to PostScript printers with just a bitmap.) If you just have a .FM and a .DMF for a particular font (perhaps avnt.im and avnt.dmf), you will get the outline used to display to your

Continued on page 6

# Which Printer . . .

also has some extra software built inside of it that enables it to understand special commands. Because these printers understand the PostScript printer language, they are able to print the many EPS (Encapsulated PostScript) files available on various computer platforms. PostScript printers also traditionally have the best text printing ability of any printer. These printers inherit the high cost of the physical laser printer as well as additional fees paid for the implementation of PostScript used. Some PostScript printers only support PostScript, but many also emulate other printers. If you work with a wide range of software you will want to get a PostScript printer that also emulates other printers since not all programs support PostScript.

## The Costs

**Impact Dot Matrix-** These printers fall into two basic categories: 9 pin and 24 pin. Many people start with a 9 pin because they are the least expensive ($150-$300). They also tend to have the lowest resolution. 24 pin printers are the next step up and are the mainstay of many offices that use multi-part forms. There is a wide range from the low to the high end of 24 pin printers. The low end usually only has a narrow carriage and runs from $275 to $450. The high end offers faster print speeds and wider carriages, and runs in the $800 to $850 range. Due to the price of the high end models, I would suggest looking at an inkjet or personal laser printer, unless you really need a wide carriage or fast impact printing.The other costs of impact printers in general are ribbons and paper. Since impact dot matrix printers can pretty much use any paper, I won't list prices. Ribbons run from $5 to $30 per ribbon with multi-color ribbons running higher.

**Inkjet-** Inkjet printers also fall into two categories, color and black & white. The color printers are lower in resolution, but give fantastic color at good prices. The HP PaintJet is an excellent example of the color inkjet and costs between $950 to $1100. The PaintJet only has a narrow carriage. For larger work there is the PaintJet XL which costs about $700 more. On the black & white side there are several offerings. HP makes the DeskJet line which ranges in price from $500 and Canon makes the BubbleJet printers that start from $350. The big costs in inkjet printers are the ink cartridges and paper. The ink cartridges can cost between $16 to $30. The color cartridges that the PaintJet use tend to be the most expensive because they hold three different colors of ink (Cyan, Magenta & Yellow). Paper is important for inkjet printers because of the mechanism of printing. PaintJet paper can cost $20 for 200 sheets, and can make a very big difference in print quality.

**Laser-** Laser printers are generally the most expensive, but prices are coming down. It used to be laser printers were only for the office and cost $5000 or more. Now you can get a personal HP compatible Laser printer for $700 to $1000. When I say per-

Continued on page 7


## Soft-Logik Publishing

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|---|---|---|---|---|
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## Show-Ad-Artic

### Show News

The near final version of PageStream 2.1 for the Atari was shown by Soft-Logik at the Pacific Northwest Atari Festival in Richmond, Canada, July 27 Soft-Logik will be represented by the M.I.S.T usergroup at the Indianapolis, Indiana Atari Festival III. Soft-Logik will also be attending Ami Expo in Orlando, Florida July 26-28.

### SL Ads

| Magazine | May | June | July |
|---|---|---|---|
| Amiga Format | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| ST Format | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| AmigaWorld | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Atari User | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Amazing | ✓ | | ✓ |
| ST Informer | | ✓ | ✓ |

### Article Stuff

Mentionings of Soft-logik and/or PageStream can be found in June - ST Format, May - Amazing and June - Atari User Journal.

## AmiDock

AmiDock, What is it? Where did it come from? Why is it here? What can it do for me? and Where can I get a copy of it?

AmiDock is a small program (~28k) that will put up a row or column of icon-like buttons on the WorkBench screen. These buttons can be configured to run any program you want when pressed. For those of you familiar with the NeXT computer, AmiDock is modeled after its dock.

AmiDock was inspired by my attending a NeXT computer developers conference. The NeXT computer has a row of icons down the right side of its screen, this is called the "dock". The benefit of having a "dock" to place programs on was immediately obvious. There are no drawers to search through to get to the icon for the program to run, it's always right at your fingertips.

After seeing this I wanted some thing like that on my Amiga and knew that the Amiga could do better. So I sat down and began to write AmiDock. The NeXT dock had some limitations. For example, it could only be on the

# DTP World


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## Fontology. . .

screen, to print to your dot matrix printer, and to output to your PostScript device. (It wonÕt use a resident PostScript font without a .PSF header file. That is still needed if you want to use the 35 built in fonts in the standard LaserWriter+ set and avoid downloading a lower quality outline).

If you have both a bitmap and an outline for a particular font, something wonderful happens. Below 24 pixels (not points), PageStream will always use the closest bitmap font in size, both on screen and to the printer. Below this size, many unhinted outline fonts begin to look unreadable to the printer as well as the screen. Also, if you have a bitmap font that is larger than 24 pixels, PageStream will use that bitmap only if it needs a size that is within half a pixel of its size. Otherwise, it's the outline fonts to the rescue.

If you noticed, I didn't use the word point size very often. I used pixel size instead. When you talk about a bitmap font, you assume that .12H means a 12 point font. This is only half the truth. It's only a 12 points font on a "H"ires or 77x77 dpi screen at a scale of 100% (or actual size), just as a .14I font is a 14 point font only on an "I"nterlaced 65x55 dpi screen. The 24 pixel cutoff between using bitmap and outline fonts is not the same as 24 points except for one very special case where a screen or printer pixel is equal to a point (ie, a 72 dpi output device). Otherwise, if you want to know the point size that PageStream will stop using bitmap fonts and start using outline fonts, use the formula: 24 / ydpi * 72 = pointsize cutoff (or in reduced form, 1728/ydpi = pointsize cutoff). For some standard screens and printers the cutoff between bitmap and outlines are: When printing to a PostScript printer, the .PSF and .PSF/.PS combinations still work the same. For most .PSF/.PS downloading setups, however, the .PS was derived from the .DMF outline. This means that keeping the .PSF/.PS is unneeded, even if you never print to dot matrix. The .DMF files is smaller than the .PS, you will get the same output because they are the same (just in different formats), and you will get outlines to screen automatically. You still need to keep the .PSF files for the fonts if you wish to continue to use the internal fonts in the PostScript printer.

| Screen/Printer | Ydpi | Cutoff in Points |
|---|---|---|
| Amiga Interlaced Hires | 55 | 31 |
| Amiga Non-Interlaced Hires | 27 | 64 |
| ST Hires | 77 | 22 |
| ST Medres | 36 | 48 |
| Epson X | 216 | 8 |
| Epson Q | 180 | 10 |
| NecP6 | 360 | 5 |
| HP LaserJet | 300 | 6 |
| HP PaintJet | 180 | 10 |

**Note: The X dpi does not figure into the cutoff, except when you are printing landscape, then X dpi is used instead of Y dpi.**

Next time, we will mix in Compugraphic and Type 1 fonts, and show you how they interact together, why you would use them, and where to buy them.

### Definitions:

**Internal Fonts-** Font outlines contained in the printers ROM and accessed/used by computer programs when printing.

**Downloadable Fonts-** Font outlines which are contained in a file at the computer level and sent to the printer when that font is used.

**DPI-** Dots or Pixels Per Inch.

**.PS-** PageStream 1's downloadable PostScript font file type.

# Which Printer. . .

sonal. I mean a printer that is well designed to meet the needs of one or a few people. There are $20,000 behemoths that are meant to serve offices that I am not considering in this article. On the slightly larger but not gigantic side, there are printers in the $1,000 to $1,300 dollar range. As you can see, the low end of this market overlaps with the high end of both impact dot matrix and inkjet printers. In my opinion, for black & white work, this is the superior class of printer. Ribbons are replaced by toner cartridges in laser printers. Each new cartridge costs around $90 to $100. There is however a booming business in refilled toner cartridges, and they cost about $45 to $60. In our area there are several companies that will delivery refilled cartridges and pick up your empties. Paper is a concern as always, and laser printers have a way of eating a lot of paper. We buy photocopier paper (remember that's what a laser printer is at its heart) and pay $25 to $40 a box (10 packages of 500 sheets). All office supply stores carry such paper.

**PostScript Laser-** As mentioned above this is really an extension of laser printers in general. In fact, many printers can act both as a "dumb" laser printer and a PostScript printer. The QMS PS-410 ($2000) is a good example of this type of printer. Many laser printers will also accept cartridges that transform them into PostScript printers. These cartridges typically cost $400 to $500, but on the whole are inferior to true PostScript printers. Speaking of true PostScript, not all PostScript printers are created equal. Many, almost all now, use the Adobe implementation of PostScript. Adobe is the company that invented PostScript and is the standard by which others are judged. If you have a choice, avoid the clones. Generally, I have found that whatever you may gain by buying one, it will probably not be worth it.The differences in prices in PostScript laser printers is largely driven by very obvious features. One will have more fonts, another will hold more paper, yet another will print faster or offer greater compatibility. If you are buying such a printer, make a list of the features you want and go with them. Many companies have the same PostScript printers under several names with only minor differences. Often you can buy the base unit and then add the features later. Personal PostScript printers are priced from $1400 to $2300. Slightly larger models cost from $3000 to $5000. Color printers are also available, but typically are much more expensive to purchase and upkeep. Prices range from $5000 to $30,000.

So that's it. Perhaps focusing in on the costs of printers is an unconventionally way of judging them, but often it is the bottom line that drives purchases. Before I conclude, a word about the prices quoted in this article. When I researched this article, I searched national magazines for "street" prices and suggested retail prices. I also called a local computer dealer for prices. I found that there is a huge difference between suggested and actual prices (see side bar). Because of this, prices in your area may differ significantly. For the most part though, I believe the ranges are a good basis for comparison

# Soft-Logik Publishing

right side of the screen and only in a vertical orientation. These limitations and others are not present in the Amiga version known as AmiDock. AmiDock can be placed anywhere on the WorkBench screen and in either vertical or horizontal orientation.

For many people the thought of using the CLI sends shivers down their spine. With AmiDock you can forget about the CLI and not have to fight through drawers and drawers on the WorkBench to find your favorite program each time you want to use it. To run a program with AmiDock, all that is needed is one click of the mouse. AmiDock also enables you to control the size and appearance of the images you use by letting you design your own (in case you are not artistic AmiDock comes with a bunch of ready-made images for you to use). AmiDock can be used on any Amiga system (500/1000/2000/2500/3000) running any version of the system software from 1.2 and up to and including 2.0 (it started under 1.2 and finished under 2.0). AmiDock will benefit hard drive owners the most although it can be used on a floppy disk based system. AmiDock can dramatically increase your productivity by placing your key programs only a click away.

AmiDock is currently a shareware program and can be found on all the major bulletin board systems (GEnie, CompuServe, BIX, SL BBS, etc.), on Fred Fish disk #459, or you can order directly from me by sending $25.00 to:

Gary Knight
3200 Patterson Place Dr. #307
St. Louis, MO. 63129

If you use AmiDock, I encourage you to register; which will get you a manual, the latest version of the program (1.3), and the greatest collection of AmiDock images anywhere on the planet.

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Saint Louis, MO 63123
P.O. Box 290070
Saint Louis, MO 63129
Sales: 800-829-8608
Tech: 314-894-0431
Fax: 314-894-3280
BBS: 314-894-0057

**Printer Chart**

| Printer | Type | Street Price | Sugg.Price (SUSD) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Panasonic KXP 1180 | 9 pin dot matrix | 147 | 270 |
| Epson LX810 | 9 pin dot matrix | 159 | 299 |
| Panasonic KXP1124 | 24 pin dot matrix | 279 | 499 |
| Star NX-2420 | 24 pin color dot matrix | 299 | 549 |
| Epson LQ2550 | 24 pin dot matrix | 849 | 1499 |
| HP PaintJet | Color inkjet | 961 | 1395 |
| HP DeskJet 500 | B&W inkjet | 490 | 729 |
| HP LaserJet IIP | HP | 799 | 1295 |
| HP Laser III | HP | 1499 | 2395 |
| TI MicroLaser PS17 | PostScript/HP | 1275 | 1999 |
| QMS PS 410 | PostScript/HP | 1935 | 2795 |
| QMS ColorScript 100 | Color PostScript | 6685 | 9995 |

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